Beethoven: the heroic style

Lecture 5 | Music in the Classical and Romantic Eras MCGY2612

28 March 2011

Dr David Larkin | Lecturer in Music

THE UNIVERSITY OF SYDNEY

COMMONWEALTH OF AUSTRALIA

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LISTENING TEST – NEXT WEEK @ 11am

Rubrics for the test

- There will be <u>four</u> excerpts from the set works for weeks 1-6
- Each excerpt will be played twice in total.
- The order of playing will be 1, 2, 3, 4, 1, 2, 3, 4, with short pauses between each
  - <u>Typical questions</u>
  - Identify the work (full title)
  - Give the full name of the composer
  - Identify the section from which it is this taken (e.g. what movement or what character is singing)
  - Some question related to the excerpt (e.g. identifying modulations, instruments)

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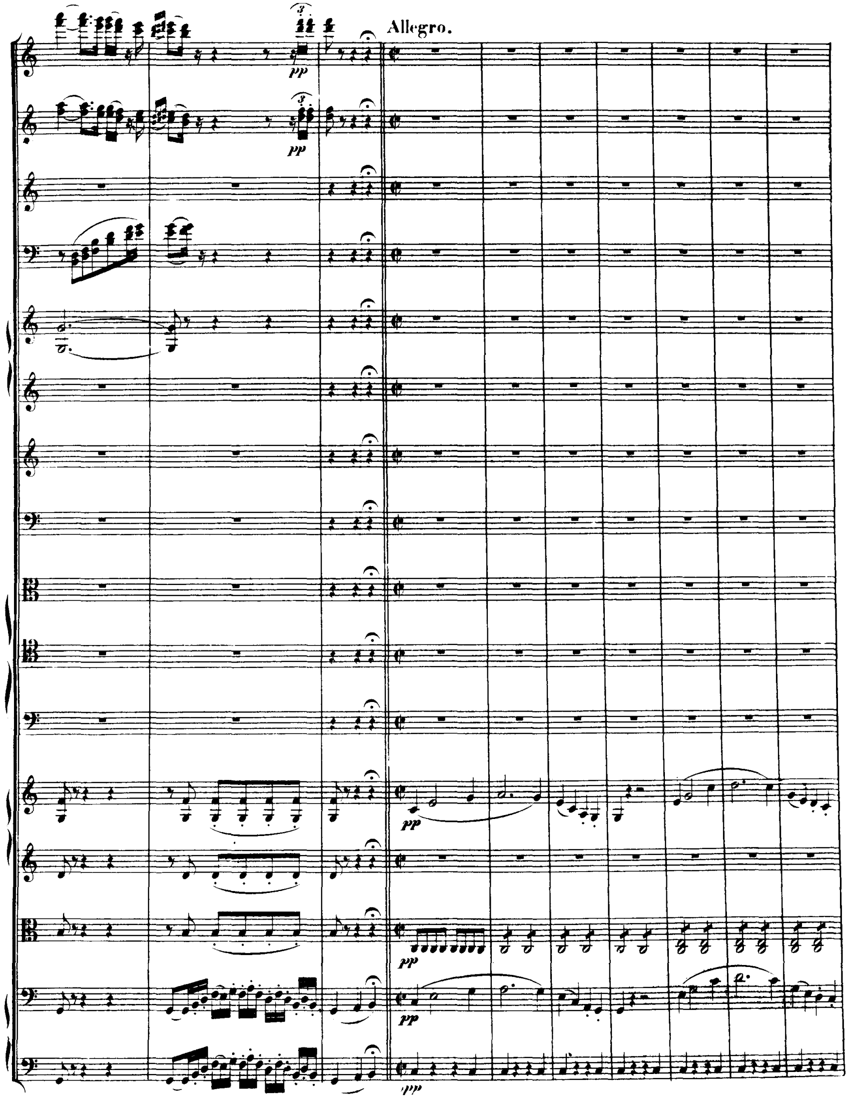
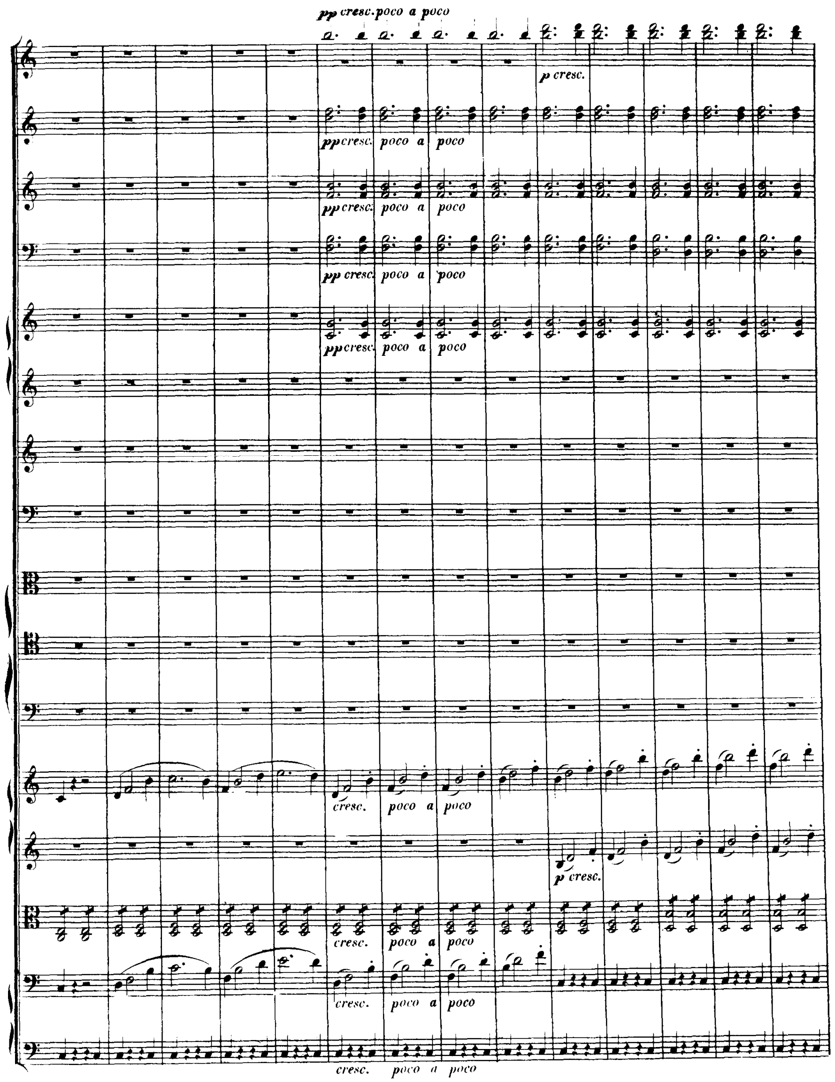
OVERTURE ‘LEONORE’ III, OP. 72a (ALLEGRO)





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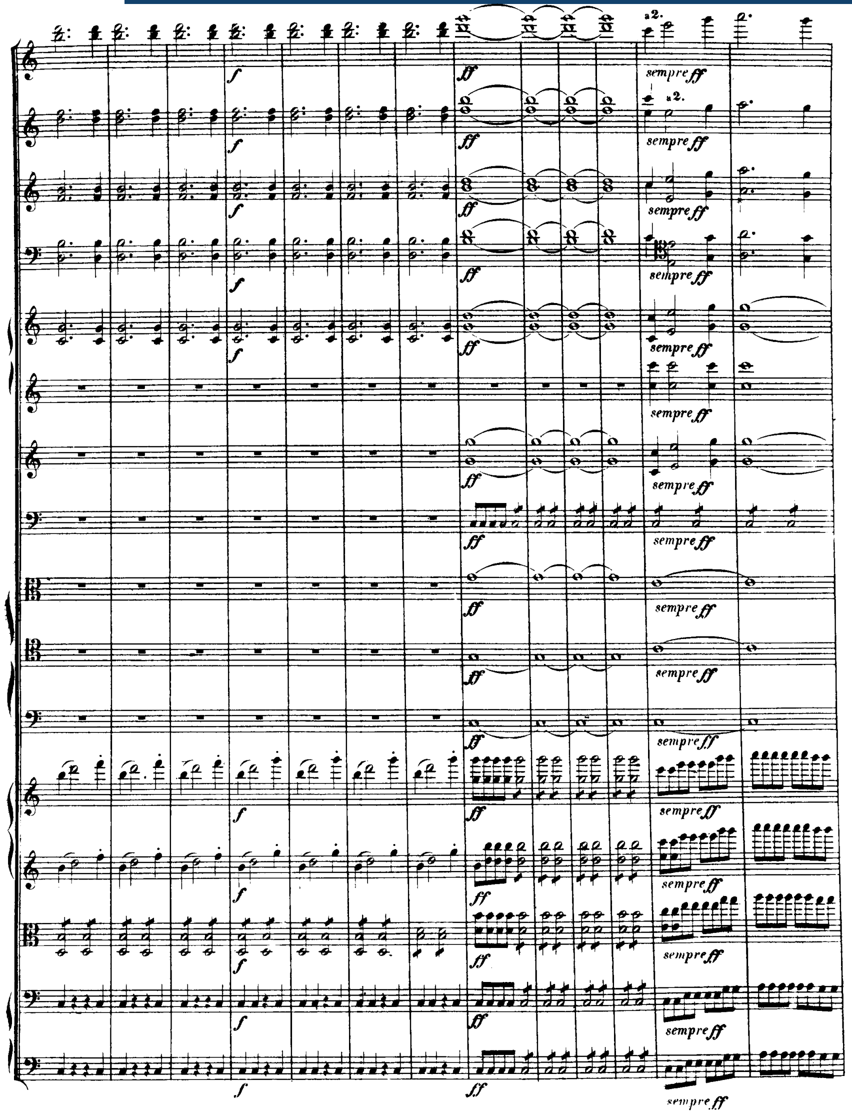

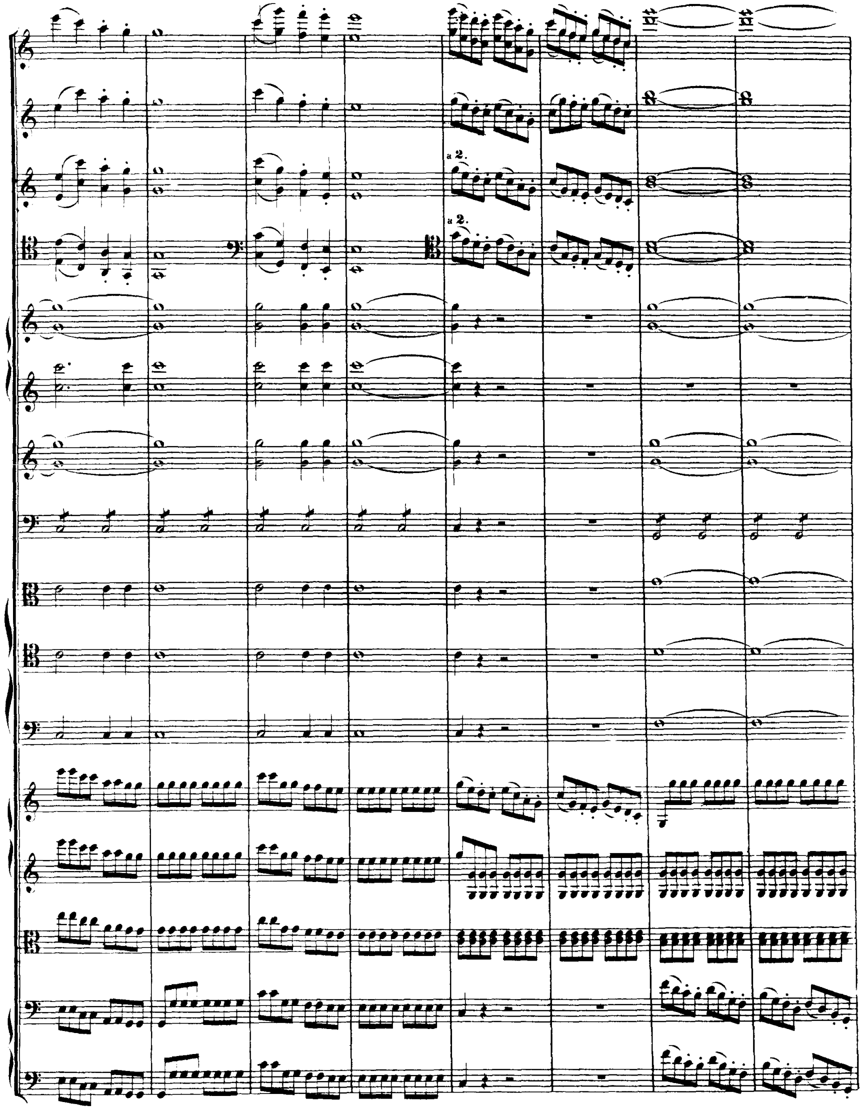

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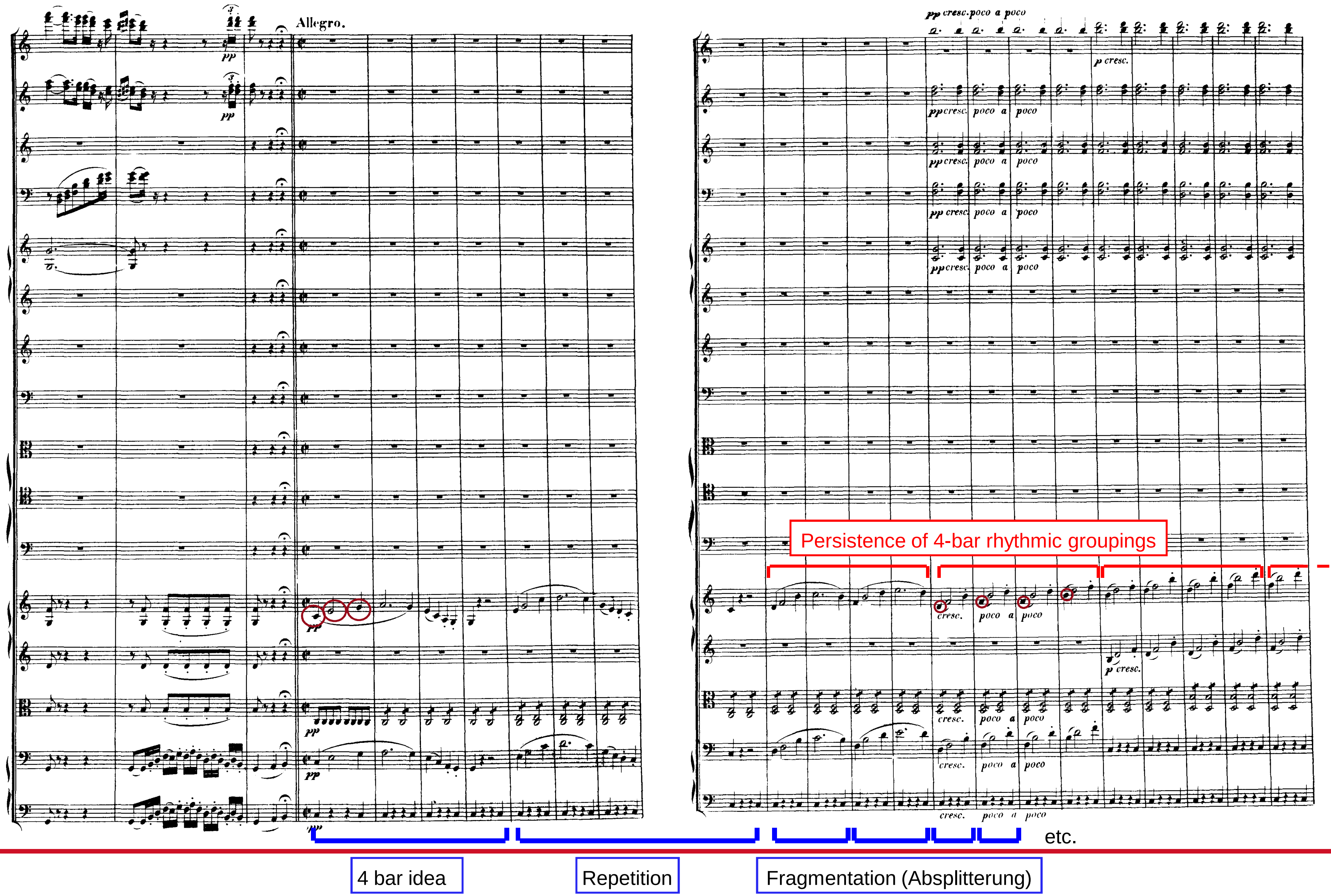

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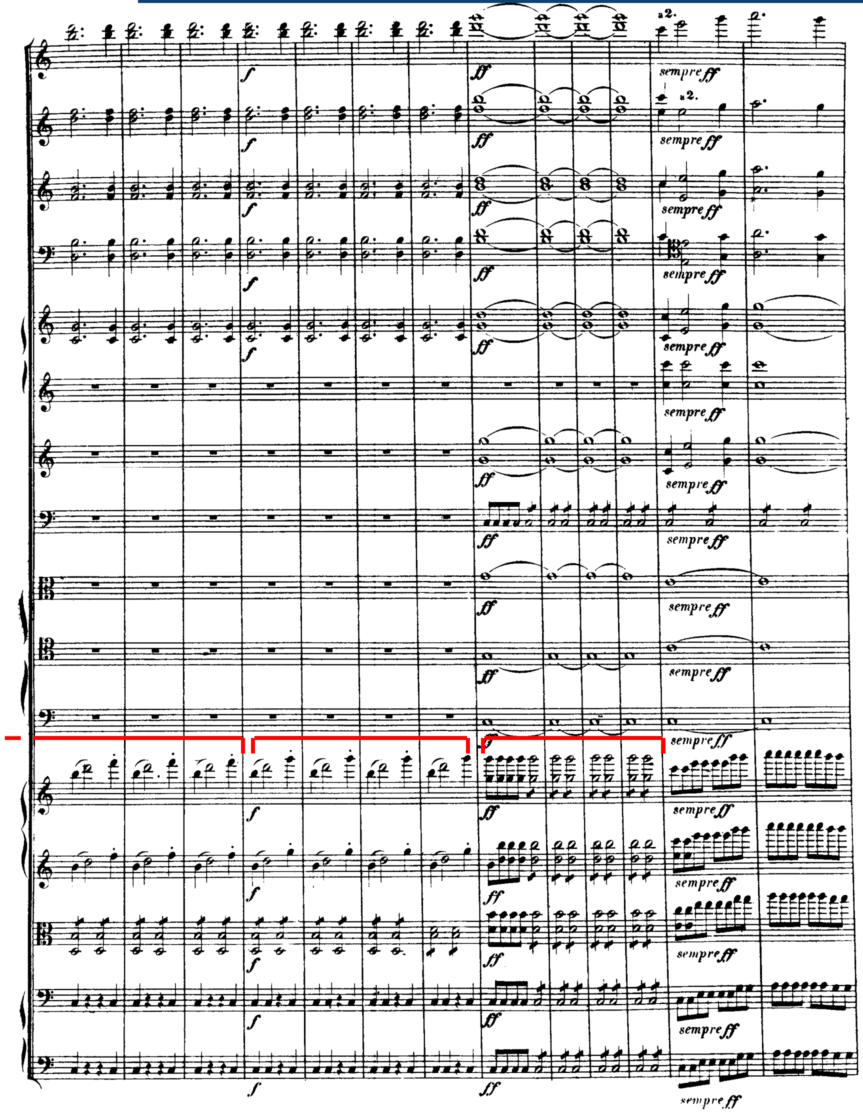
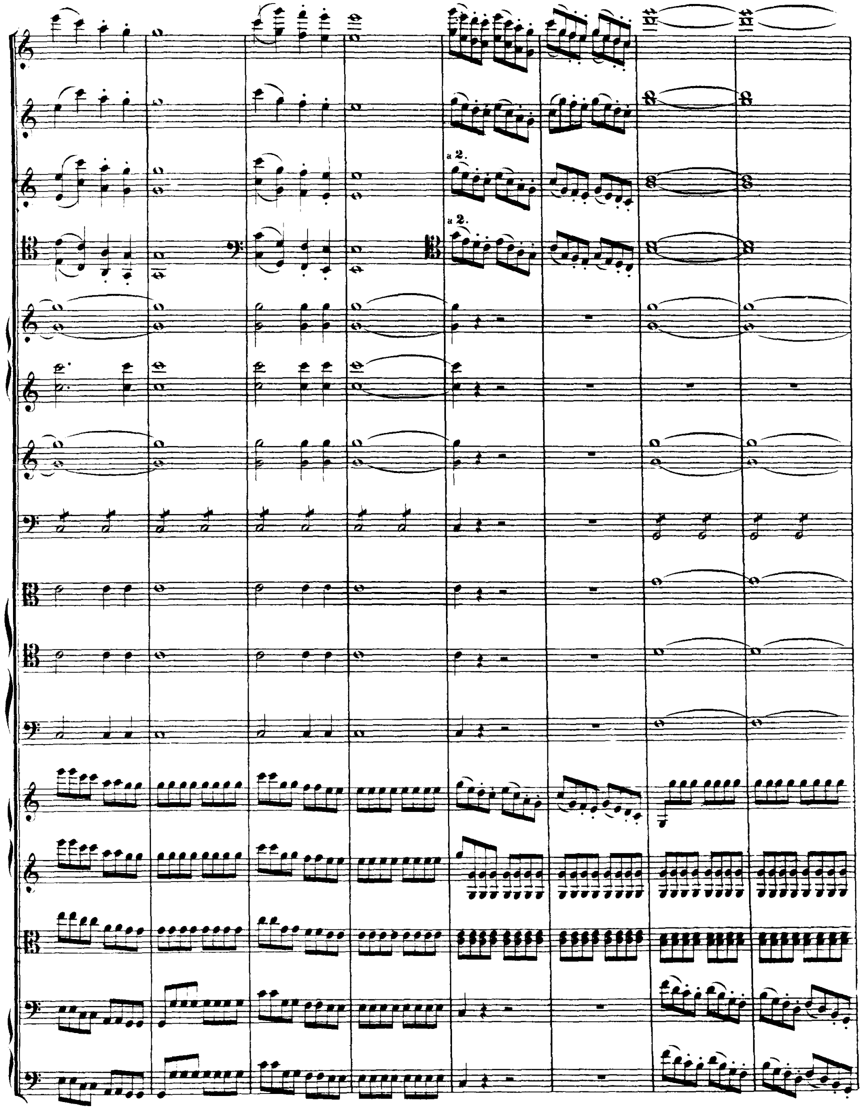


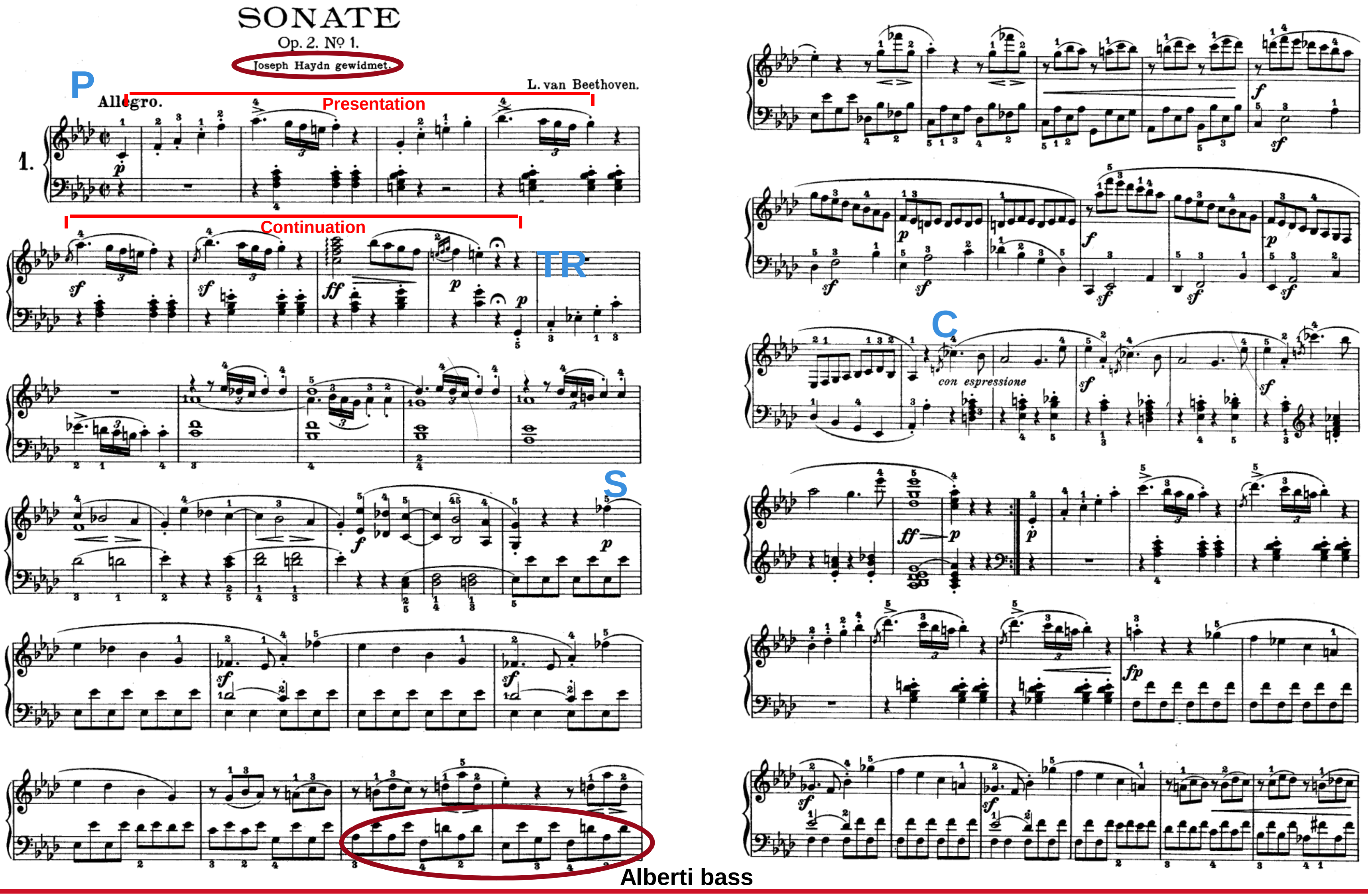


BEETHOVEN'S 'CONSECRATION'

Entry in Beethoven's album by Count Ferdinand von Waldstein (1792)

- Dear Beethoven:
- You are going to Vienna in fulfilment of your long-frustrated wishes. The Genius of Mozart is still mourning and weeping over the death of her pupil. She found a refuge but no occupation with the inexhaustible Haydn; through him she wishes once more to form a union with another. With the help of assiduous labour you shall receive *Mozart's spirit from Haydn's hands.*
- Your true friend, Waldstein

SONATA NO. 1 (OP. 2/1), 1ST MOVEMENT (1796)



MUSICAL LIFE IN VIENNA, c.1800

Report in *Allgemeine musikalische Zeitung* III (1800)

As for the artists here - : all the well-to-do and wealthy houses that once had their own orchestras have dismissed them. A player in a theatre orchestra can expect to make from 200 to 300 gulden [approx. $12-18,000 today]. Without steady employment, only a piano player may perhaps earn a decent livelihood – and even so, he must possess enough self-denial to serve willingly the houses that support him, furthermore to give lessons morning, noon, and night. The violinists are in the worst position of all; they are expected to play for nothing, since 10 dilettanti can readily be found who will do so with great pleasure, ably or otherwise. Paid private concerts are rare; and if one is set up, the musician, for a variety of reasons, profits little. Music lessons are not nearly as profitable as they once were, since dilettanti can always be had for trifling fees; the same may be said for quartet performances, once such a lucrative activity for musicians. In the society of well-to-do bourgeois or aristocratic homes, the musician today is less respected than ever before, and indeed often humiliated [...]

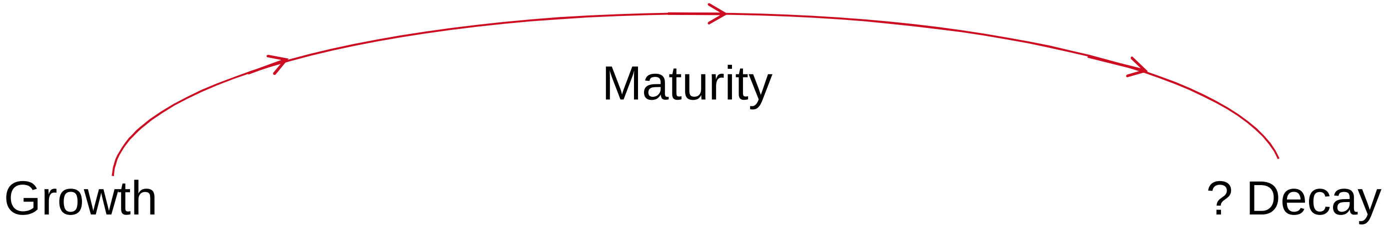
Source: Weiss/Taruskin 1984: 325

THE THREE PERIODS

Popularised by Wilhelm Lenz, *Beethoven et ses trois styles* (1852)

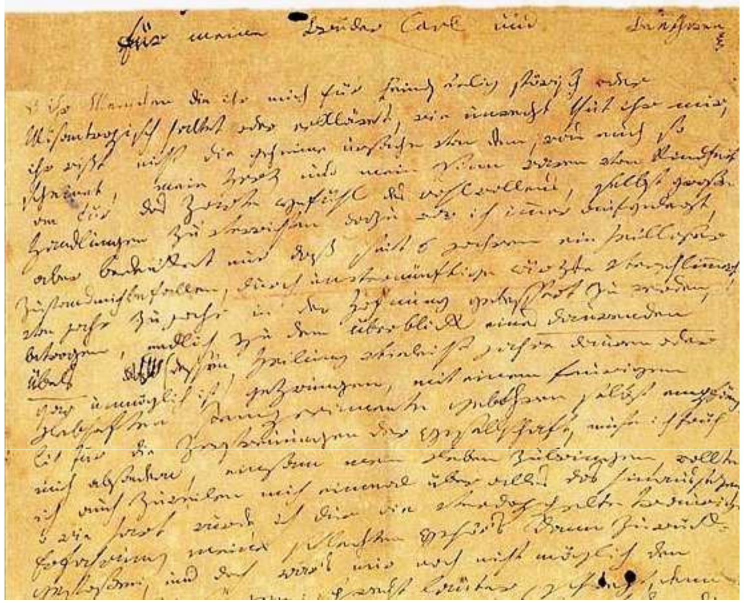
1770-1801	1802-1812	1813-1827
Early	Middle	Late

Implications of life-cycle (biological, organic) metaphor



HEILIGENSTADT TESTAMENT (EXCERPTS)

For my brothers Carl and [Johann] Beethoven



O ye men who think or declare that I am hostile stubborn or Misanthropic, how you wrong me, you do not know the secret motive of what seems thus to you. [...] I was ever disposed to accomplish great Feats, but only reflect that for the last 6 years an incurable condition has seized me, worsened by senseless physicians, cheated from year to year in the Hope of improvement, finally compelled to the prospect of a *lasting Ailment* (whose curing may perhaps take years or even be impossible).

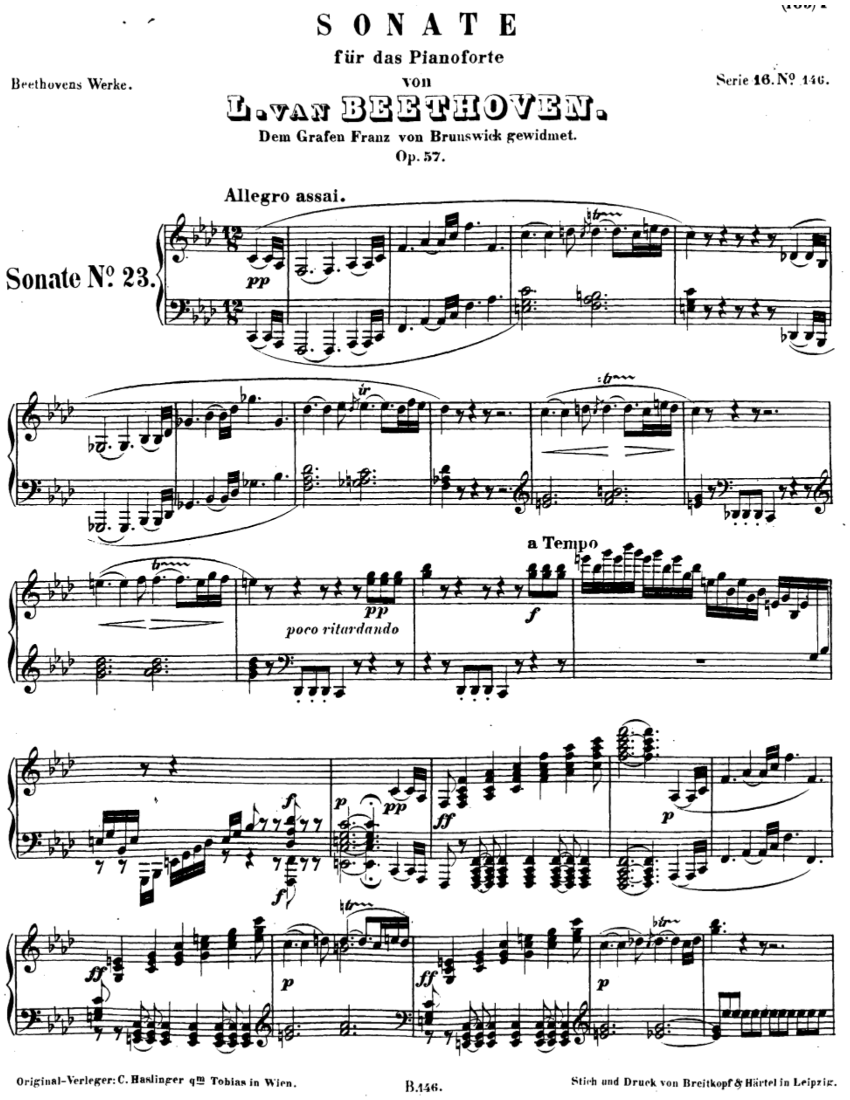
Born with a fiery Lively Temperament susceptible even to the Diversions of Society, I soon had to keep to myself, pass my life in solitude, if I attempted from time to time to rise above all this, o how harshly was I repulsed by the doubly sad Experience of my bad Hearing, yet I could not say to People: speak louder, shout, for I am deaf, alas how could I acknowledge the Weakness of *a Faculty* I once had to the highest degree of Perfection, such Perfection as only few of my Calling surely have or have had – o I cannot do it.

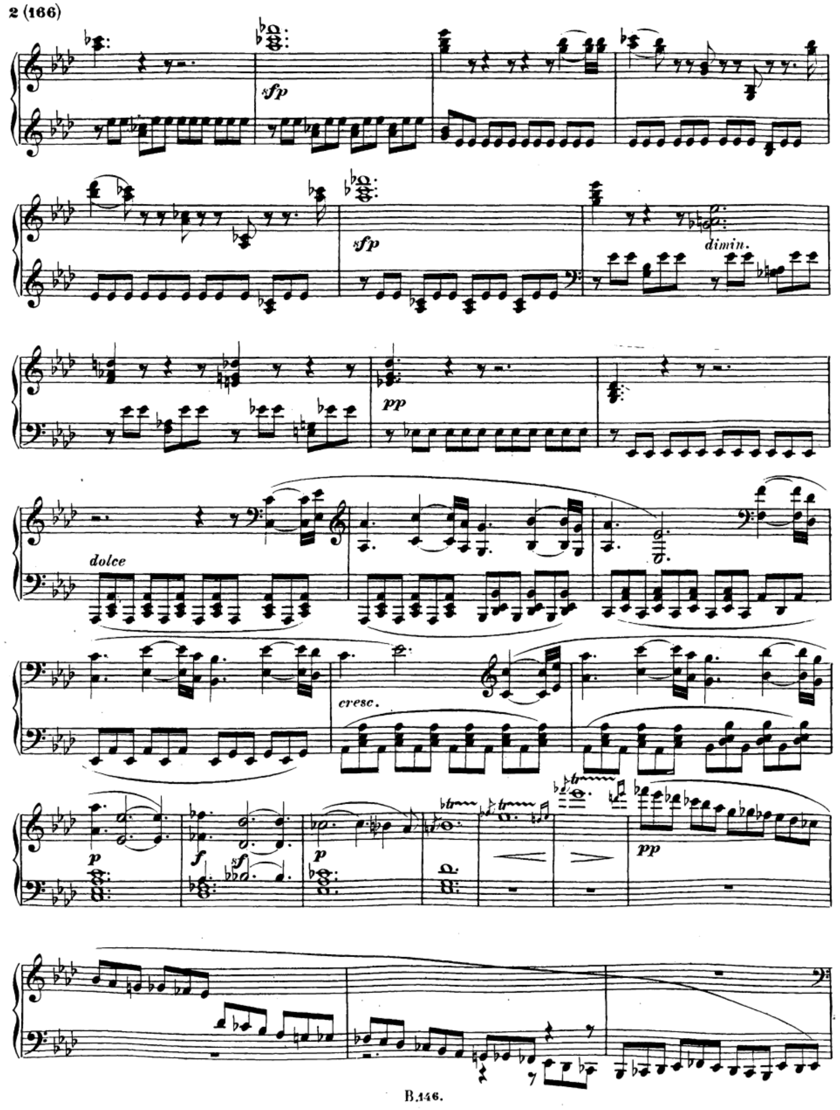
[...] what Mortification if someone stood beside me and heard a flute from afar, and *I heard nothing*; or someone *heard a Shepherd Singing*, and I heard nothing. Such Happenings brought me close to Despair; I was not far from ending my own life – only Art, only art held me back. Ah, it seemed impossible to me that I should leave the world before I had produced all that I felt I might, and so I spared this wretched life [...]

O Men, when you read this some day, think then that you have wronged me, and let any unhappy man console himself by finding another one like himself, one who, despite Nature’s impediments, yet did what was in his Power to do to be admitted to the Ranks of worthy Artists and Men. And so it is done – I hasten with joy towards my Death – should it come before I have had an Opportunity to disclose all my Artistic Capacities, then it shall still have come too soon, despite my Hard Destiny [...]

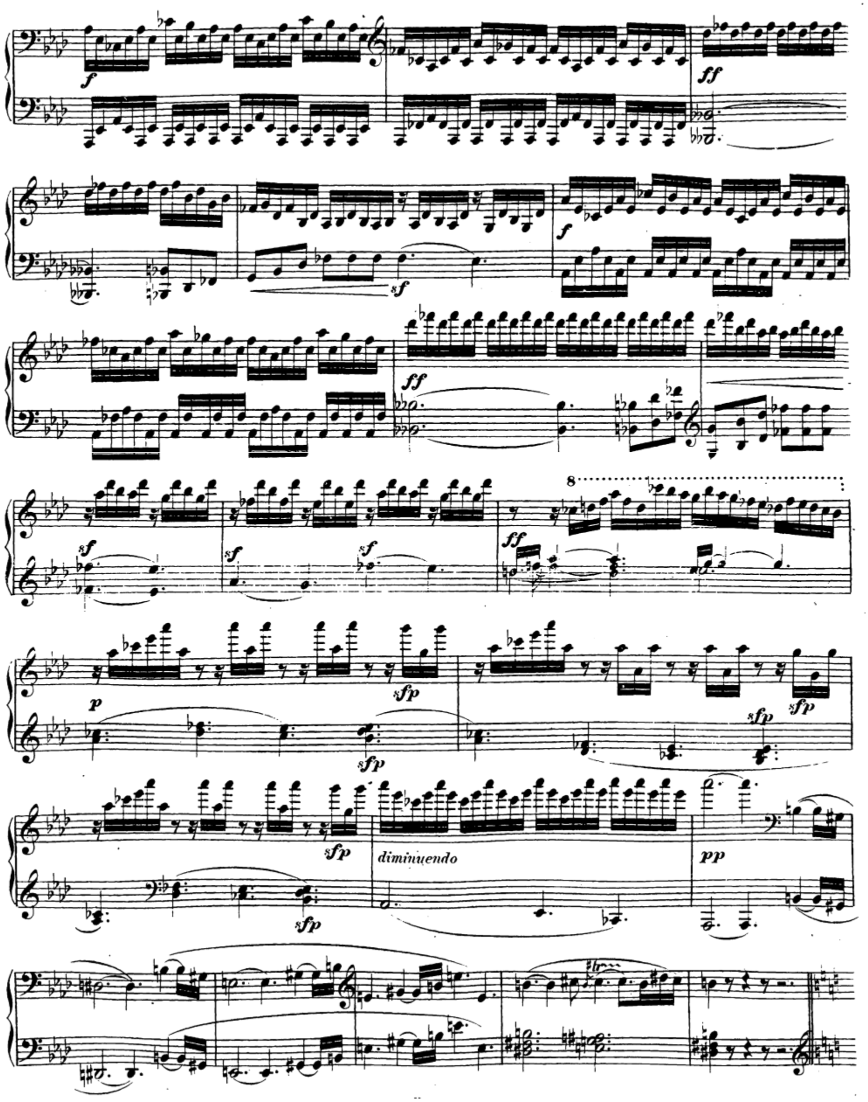
Letter from Beethoven to his brothers, 6 October 1802 (source: Weiss/Taruskin 1984: 326-328)

SONATA NO. 23 (Op. 57) ‘APPASIONATA’, I [1/2]

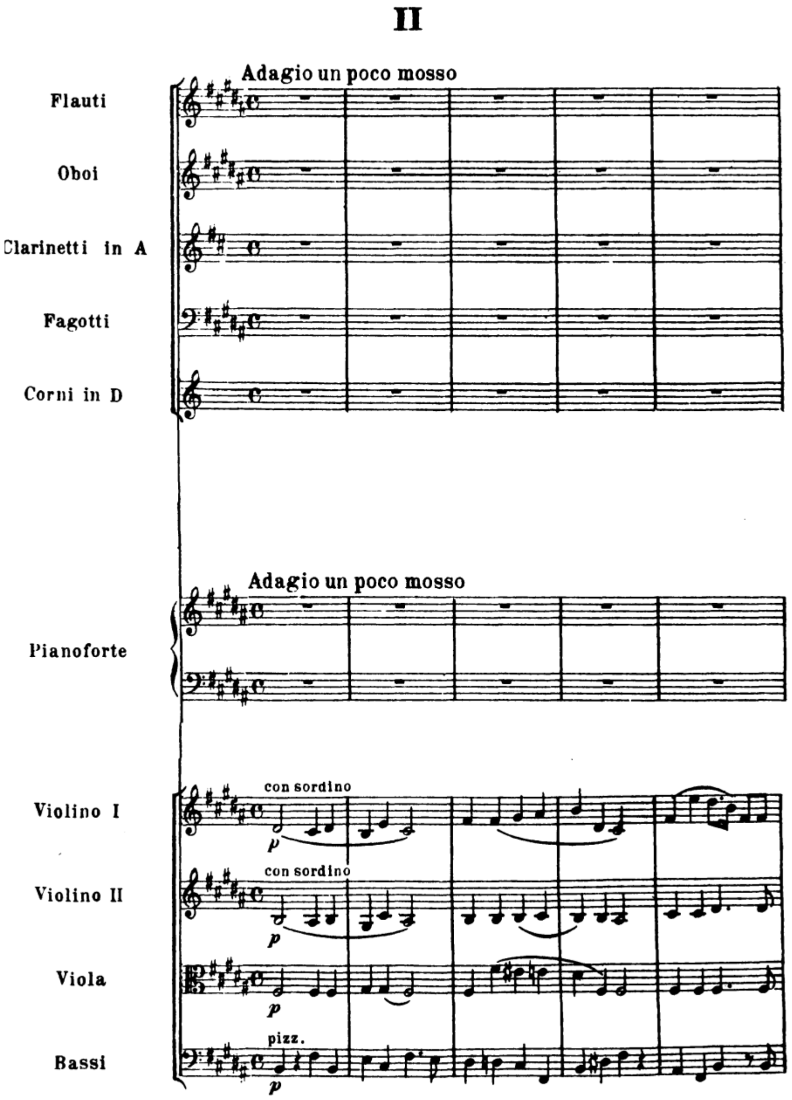


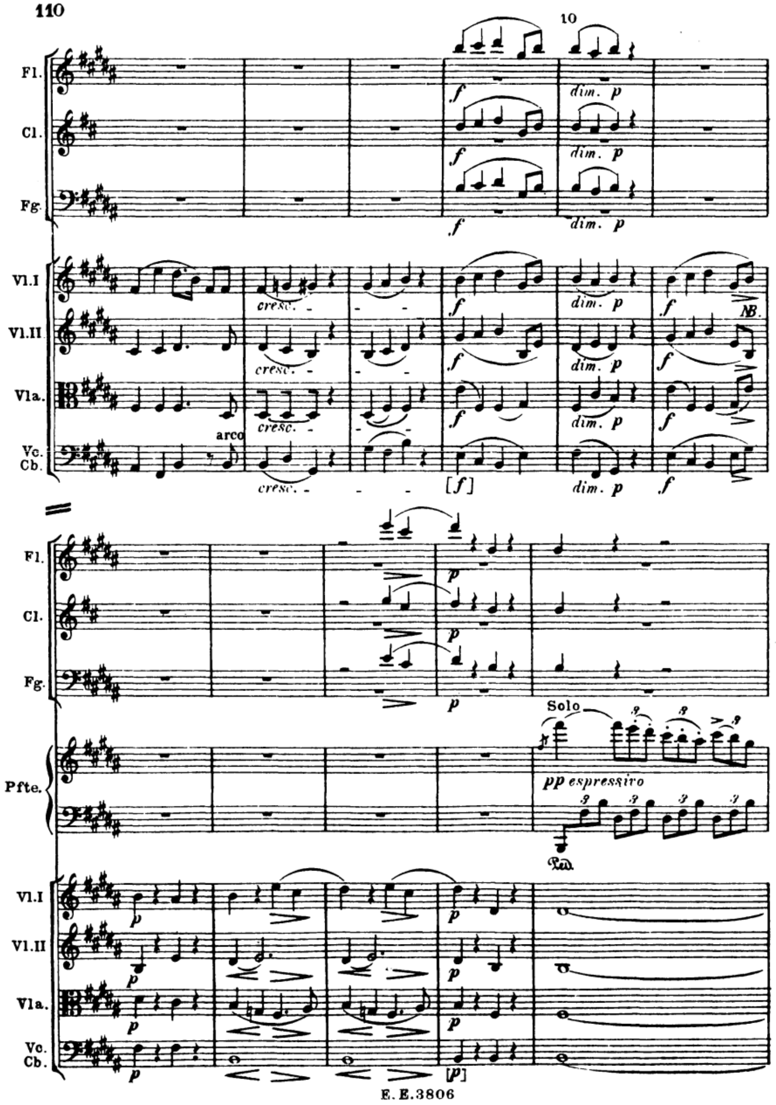


SONATA NO. 23 (Op. 57) ‘APPASIONATA’, I [2/2]



PIANO CONCERTO NO. 5 ‘EMPEROR’, II





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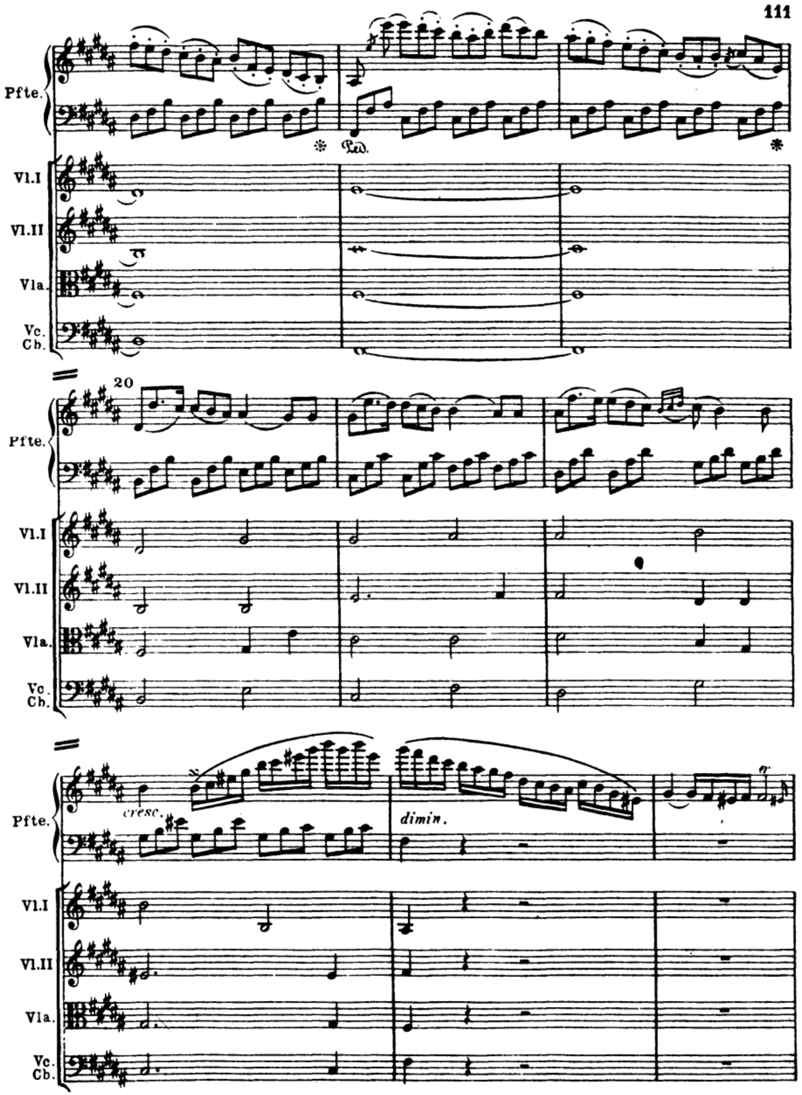

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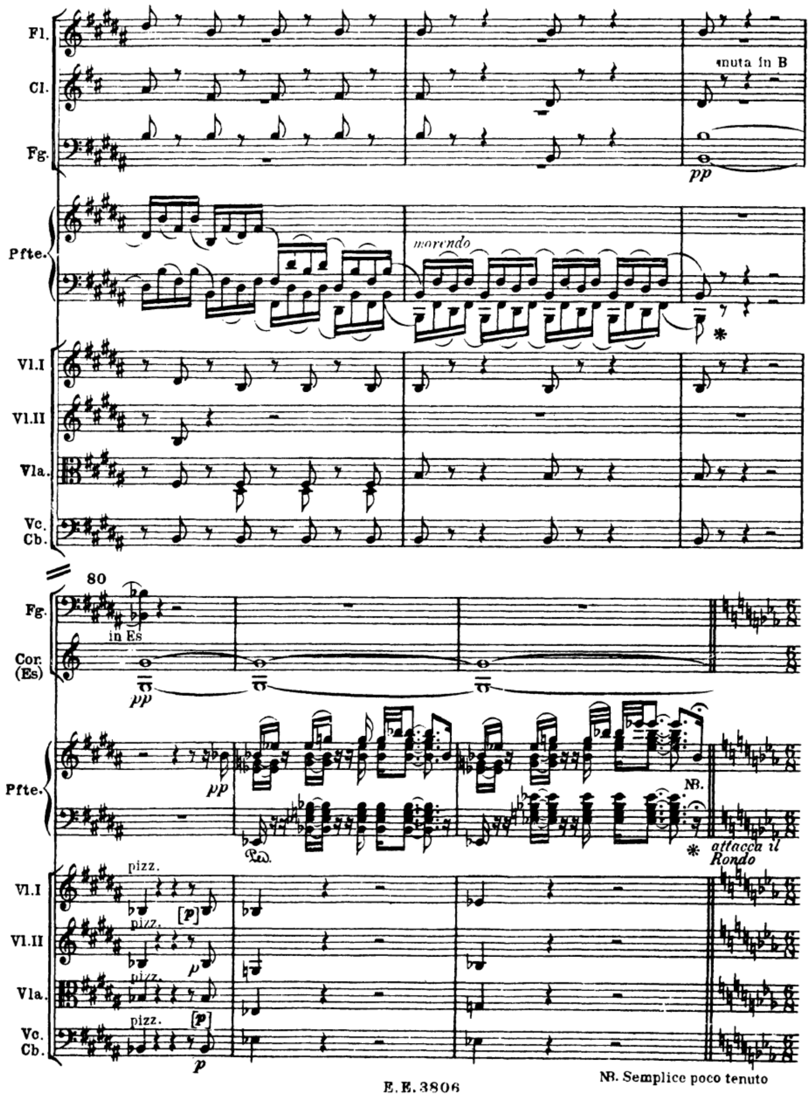
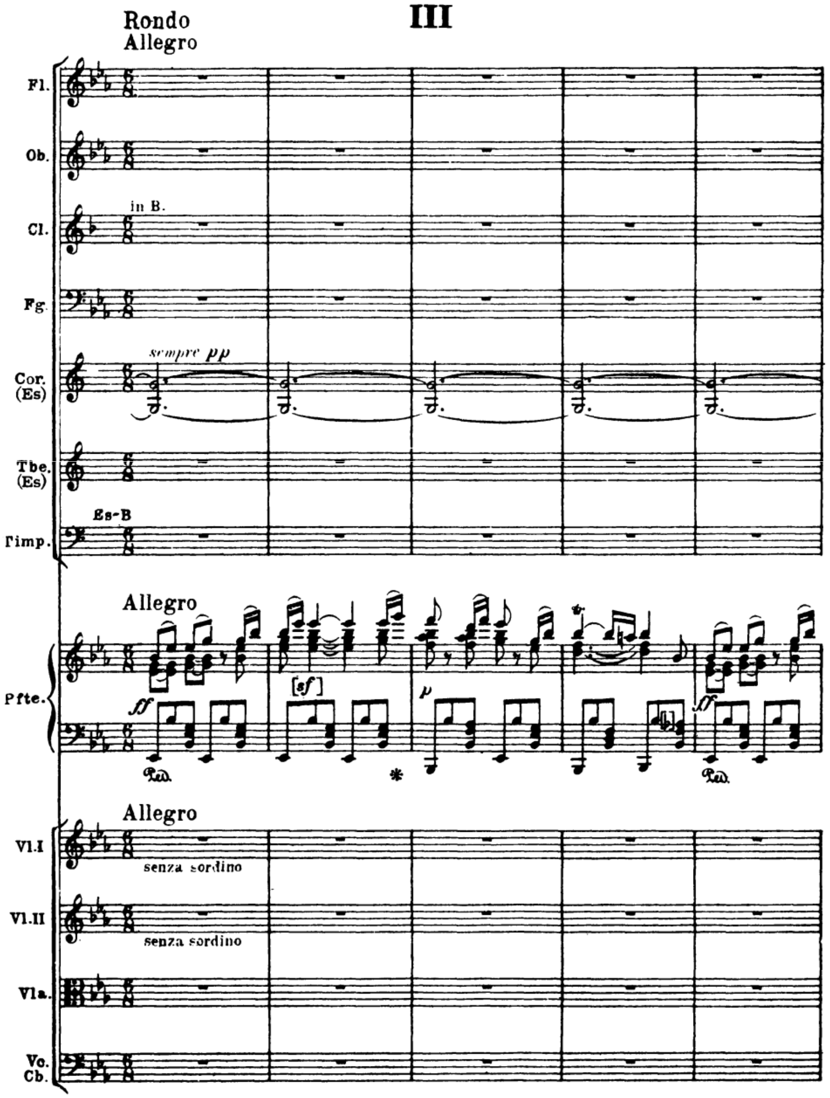
‘EMPEROR’ CONCERTO, LINK II – III





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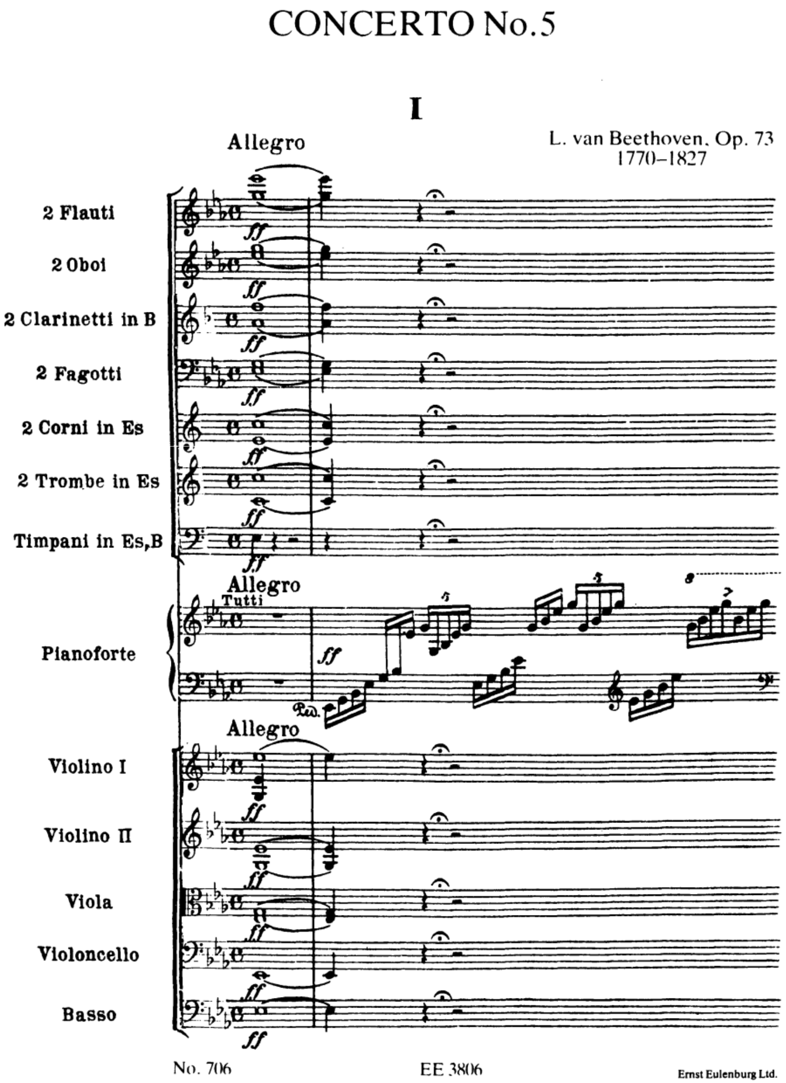
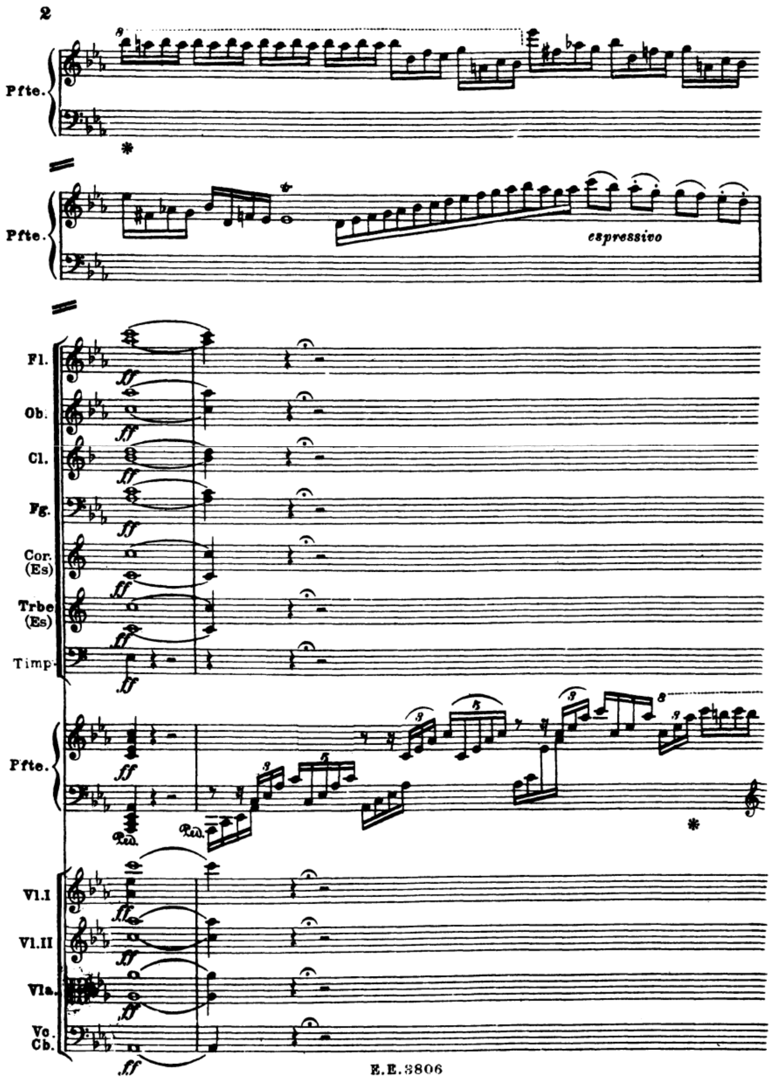
PIANO CONCERTO NO. 5 ‘EMPEROR’, I





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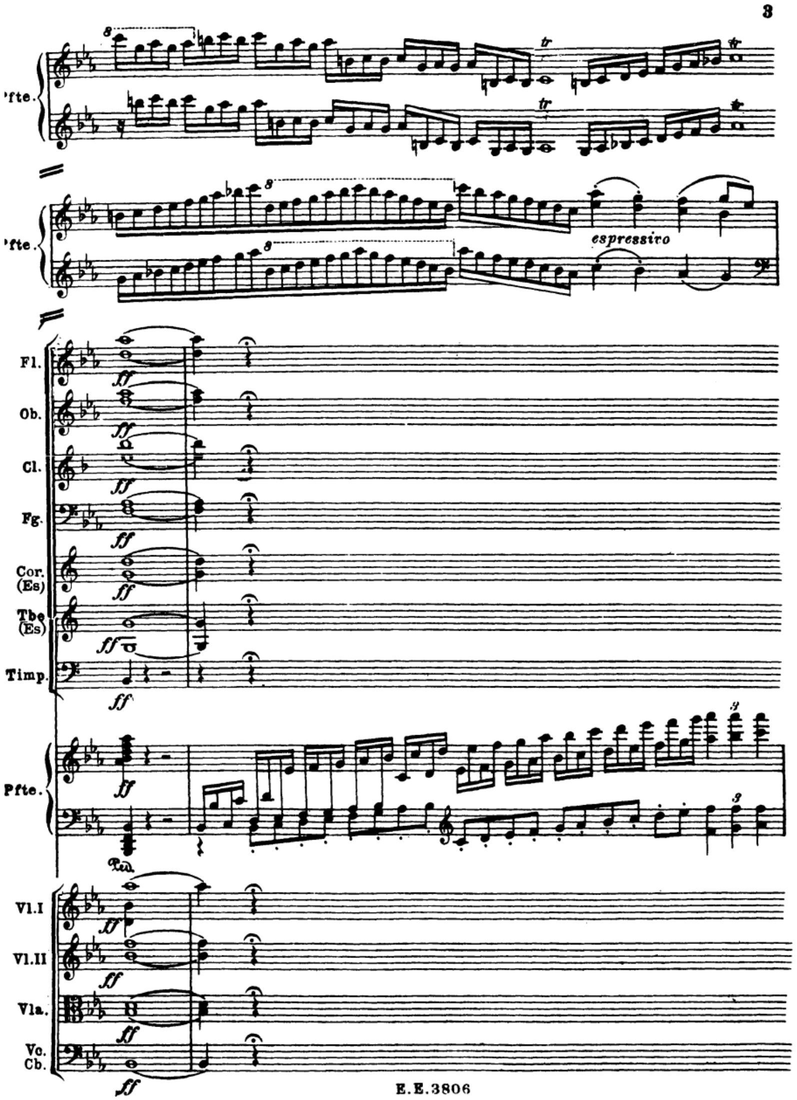
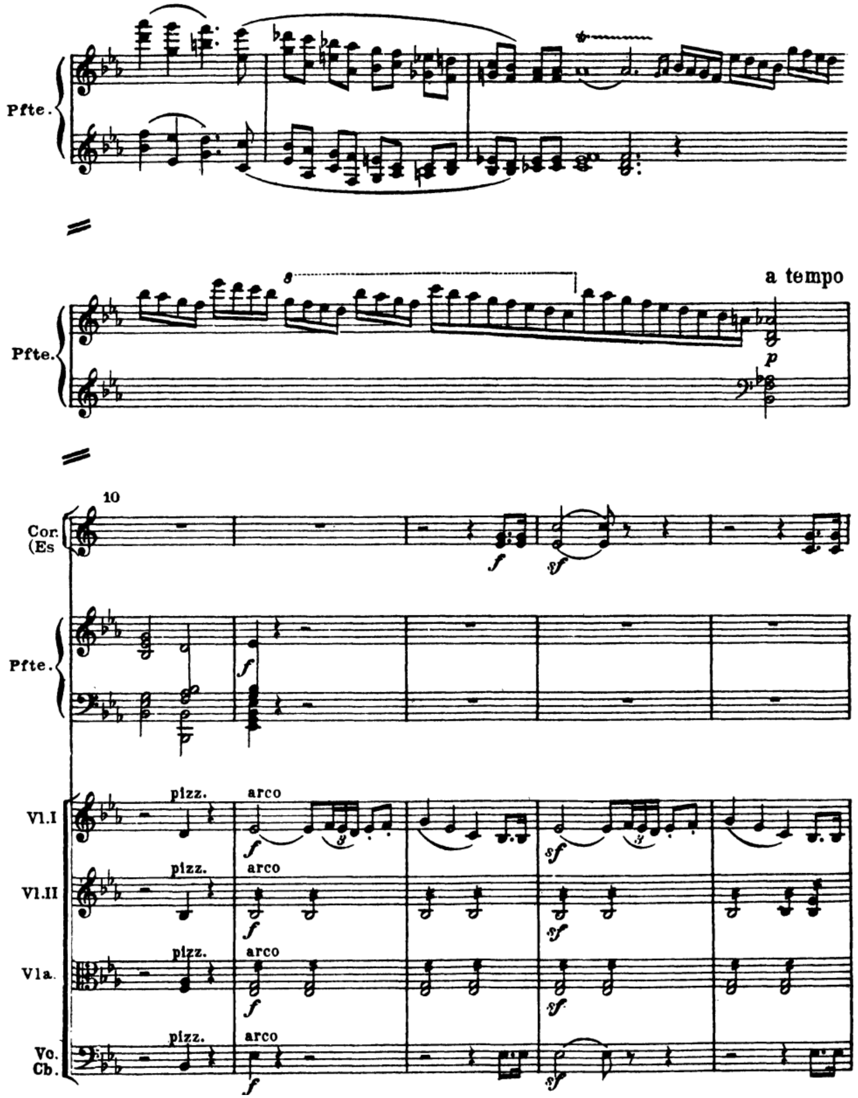




EROICA TITLE PAGE & 1st MOVEMENT LAYOUT

› **Exposition: 1-148**

- P+TR: 1-45
- S+C: 45-148

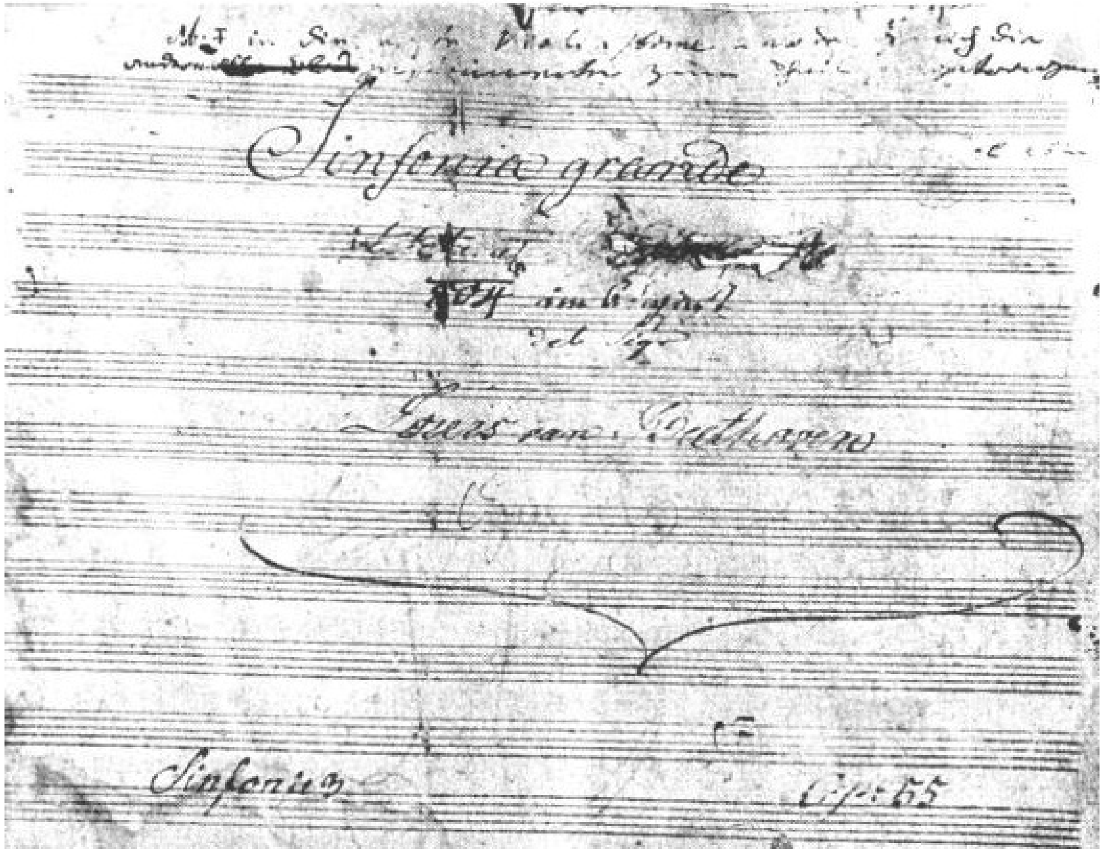
› **Development: 148-398**

- New theme : 284

› **Recapitulation: 398-556**

- P+TR: 398-448
- S+C: 448-551

› **Coda: 551-691**



EROICA SYMPHONY: FIRST MOVEMENT FORM

Exposition: 1-148

3 : P1(fanfare-like figure)
- 25: [TR?] Important hemiola figure introduced (much use of sforzati)
- 45: MC on V/V
- 45: S1 Antiphonal deployment of descending figure
- 57: S2 Contrary motion figure
- 65: S3 Dactylic semiquaver figure
- 83: S4 Anapaestic crotchet figure
- 109: S5 [?C1] Descending fanfare idea
- 132: [C2?] Ascending arp figure with syncopated chromatic continuation (ease of modulation)

Development: 148-398

- 148: P1 link from Bb to C
- 166: S1 in C maj (on dom ped)
- 178: P1 in c min, c# min
- 187: S3 in d min, g min, then uses kernel motif of S3 in modulating sequence
- 220: S1 in Ab, modulates towards
- 236: S1 idea & S3 idea used in fugato (f min modulating)
- 248: TR syncopated idea ($°^7$, a min towards e min)
- 284: **New theme** in e min
- 300: P1 in C maj, c min, modulating through to Eb, eb min
- 322: NT in eb min, dev through Gb, onto V
- 338: Hemiola influenced bass with P1 on V, modulating, culminating on Cflat
- 366: Slips back onto V by chromatic shifts, long standing on dom. P1 motto in horn anticipates recap

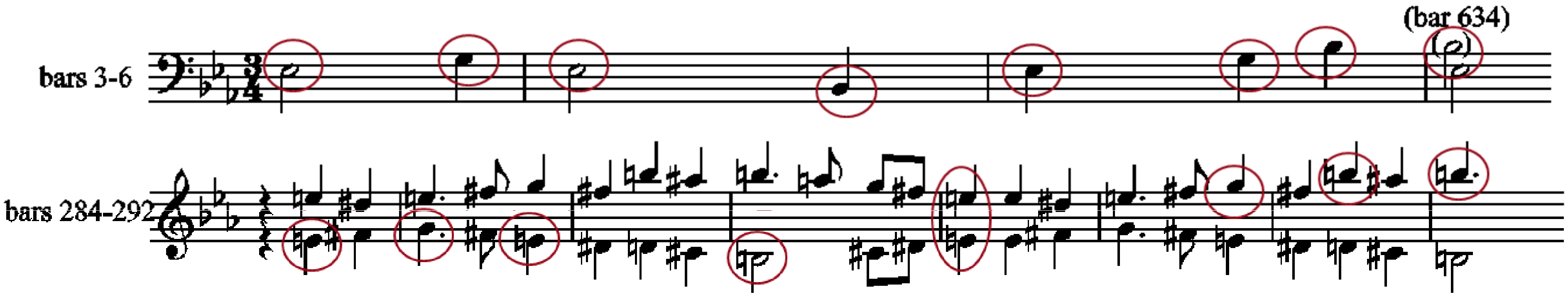
Recapitulation: 398-551

- 398: P1, c# this time interpreted as db, and slips onto [V/]F, then Db, then Bb
- 430: P1 tutti restatement (cf bar 37)
- 448: S1 [on V/Eb]
- 460: S2
- 468: S3
- 486: S4
- 512: S5 / C1
- 535: C2

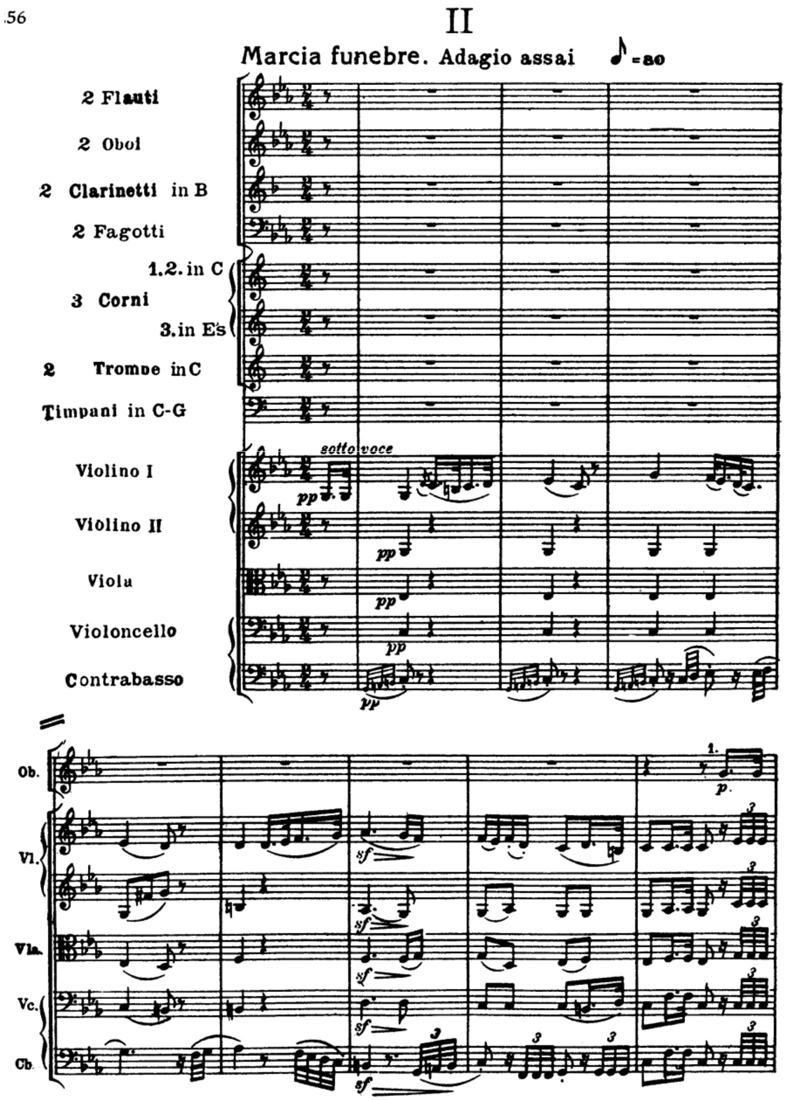
Coda: 551-691

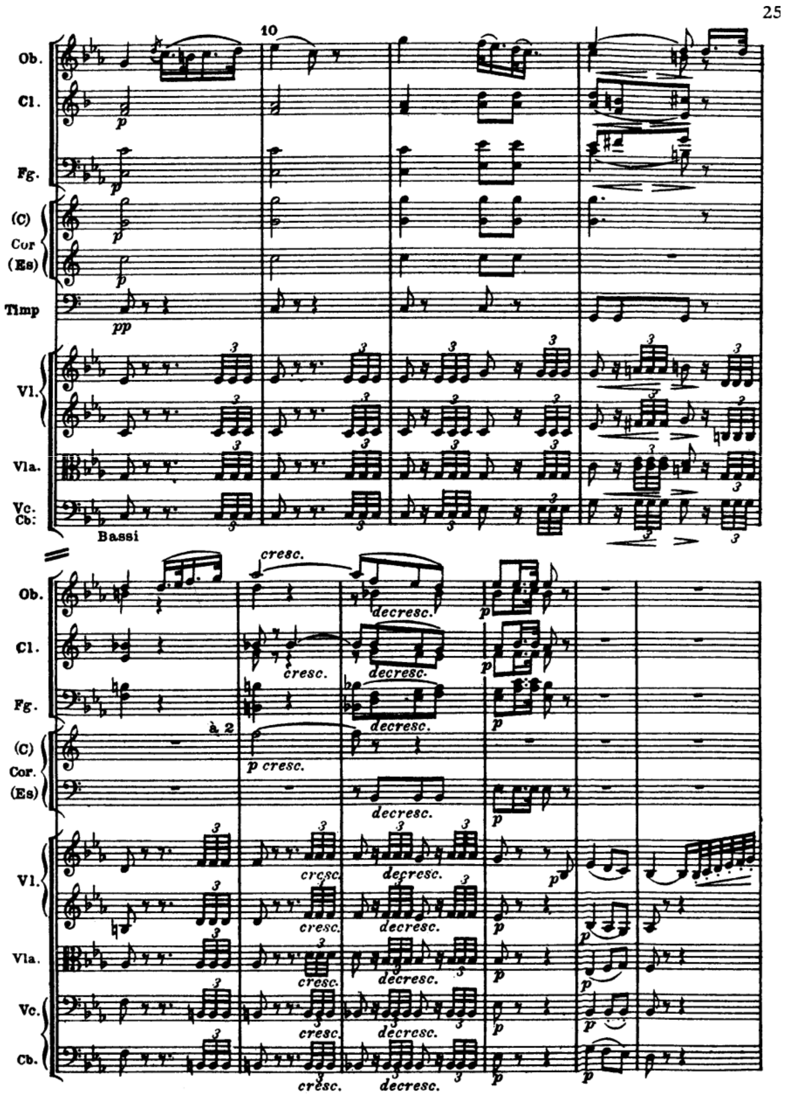
- 551: P1 based link (sequence through Eb, Db, C)
- 567: P1 now in four-bar tonic and dominant units, with counterpoint derived from S3/S4
- 581: Arrives in f min, NT, then in eb min, works towards V
- 603: V (cf bar 338), tension deflected towards vi, and brought to a satisfying close (PAC in Eb)
- 631: P1 in Eb (four bar phrases alternating I and V) with S3 motif in counterpoint; Rossini crescendo; closing cadential pattern (another PAC in Eb)
- 673: S2 figure, leading to TR syncopations and final cadence

‘NEW’ THEME IN EROICA I, DEVELOPMENT

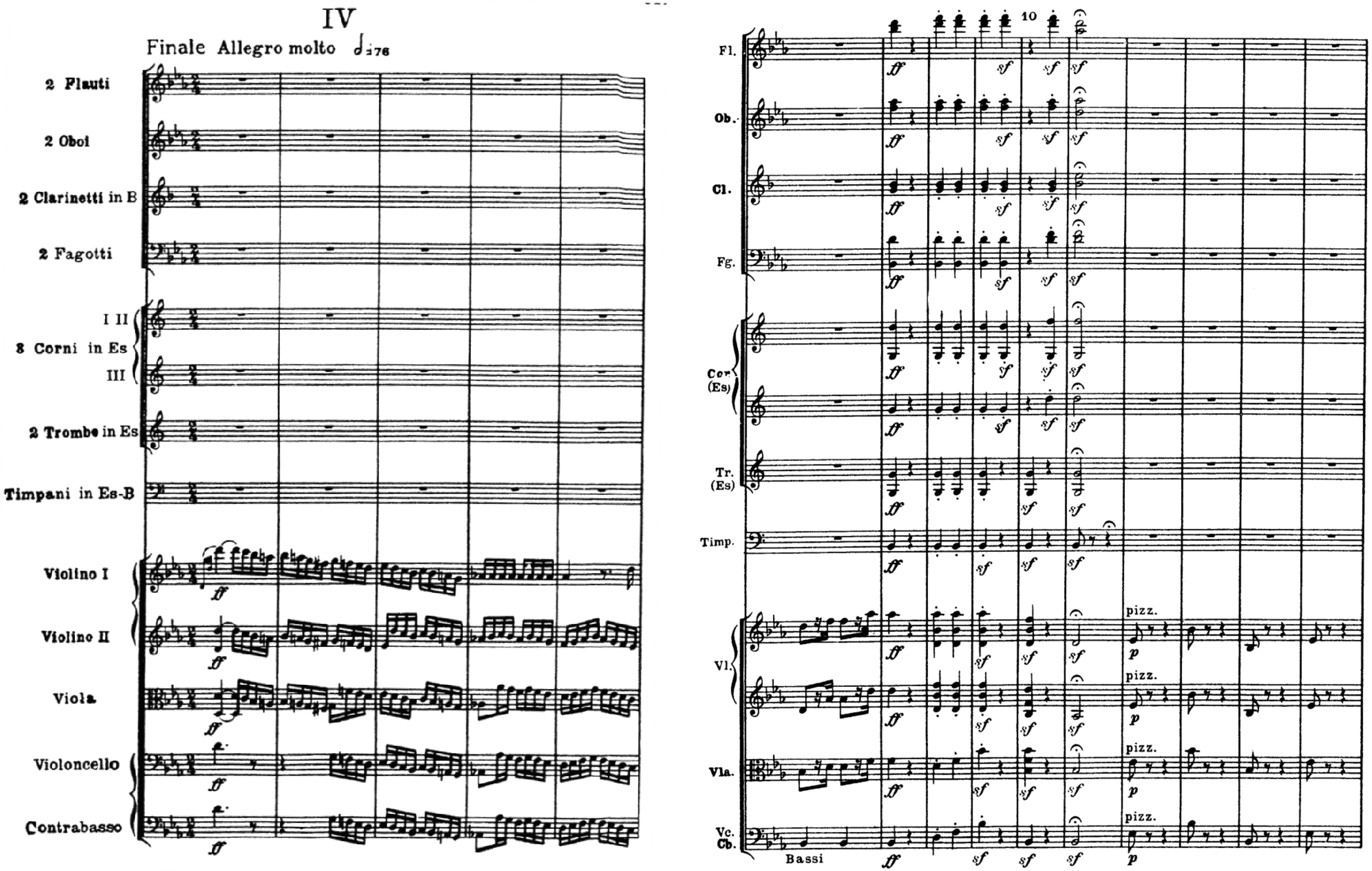


SYMPHONY NO. 3, 2ND MOVEMENT

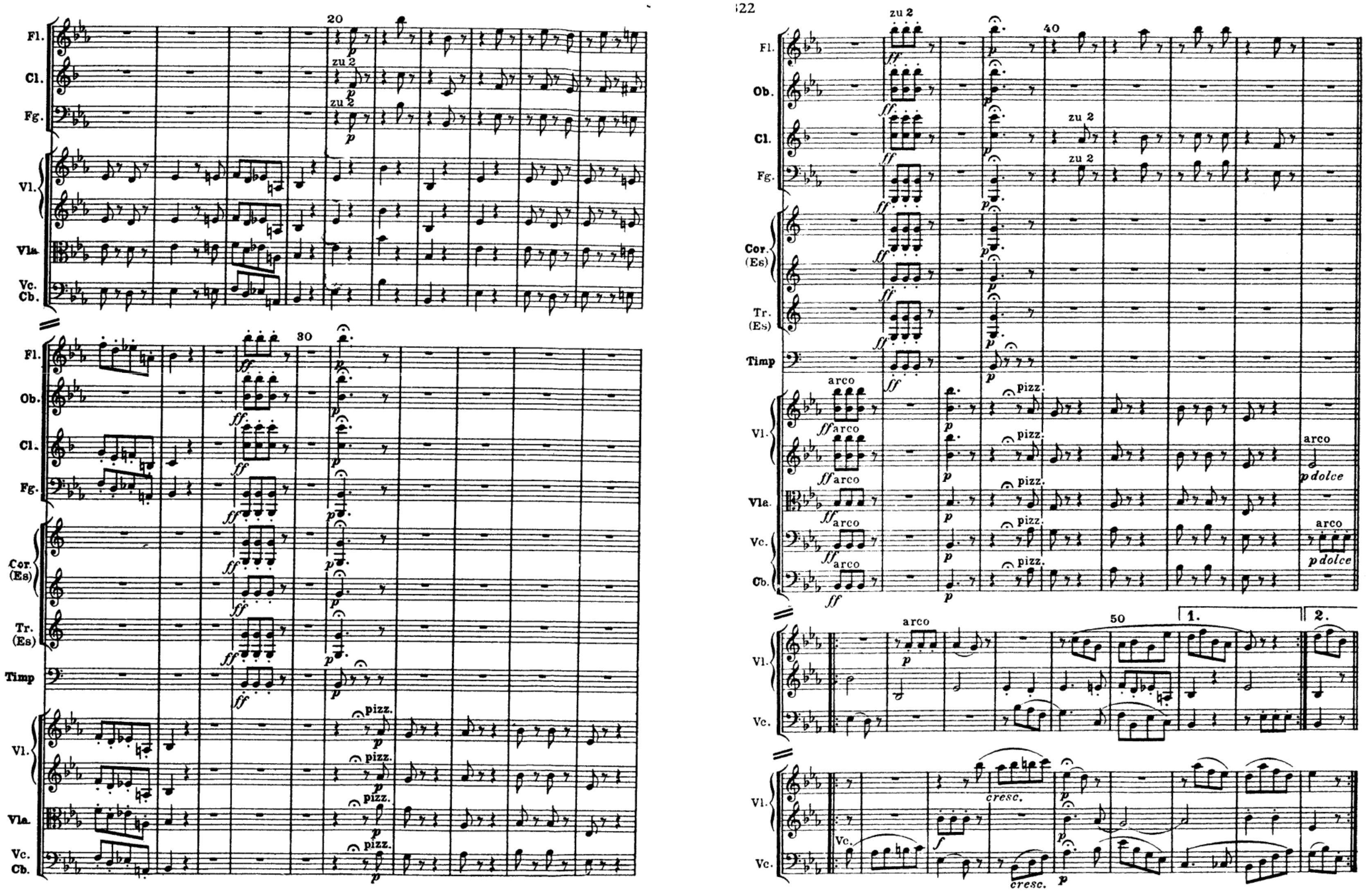




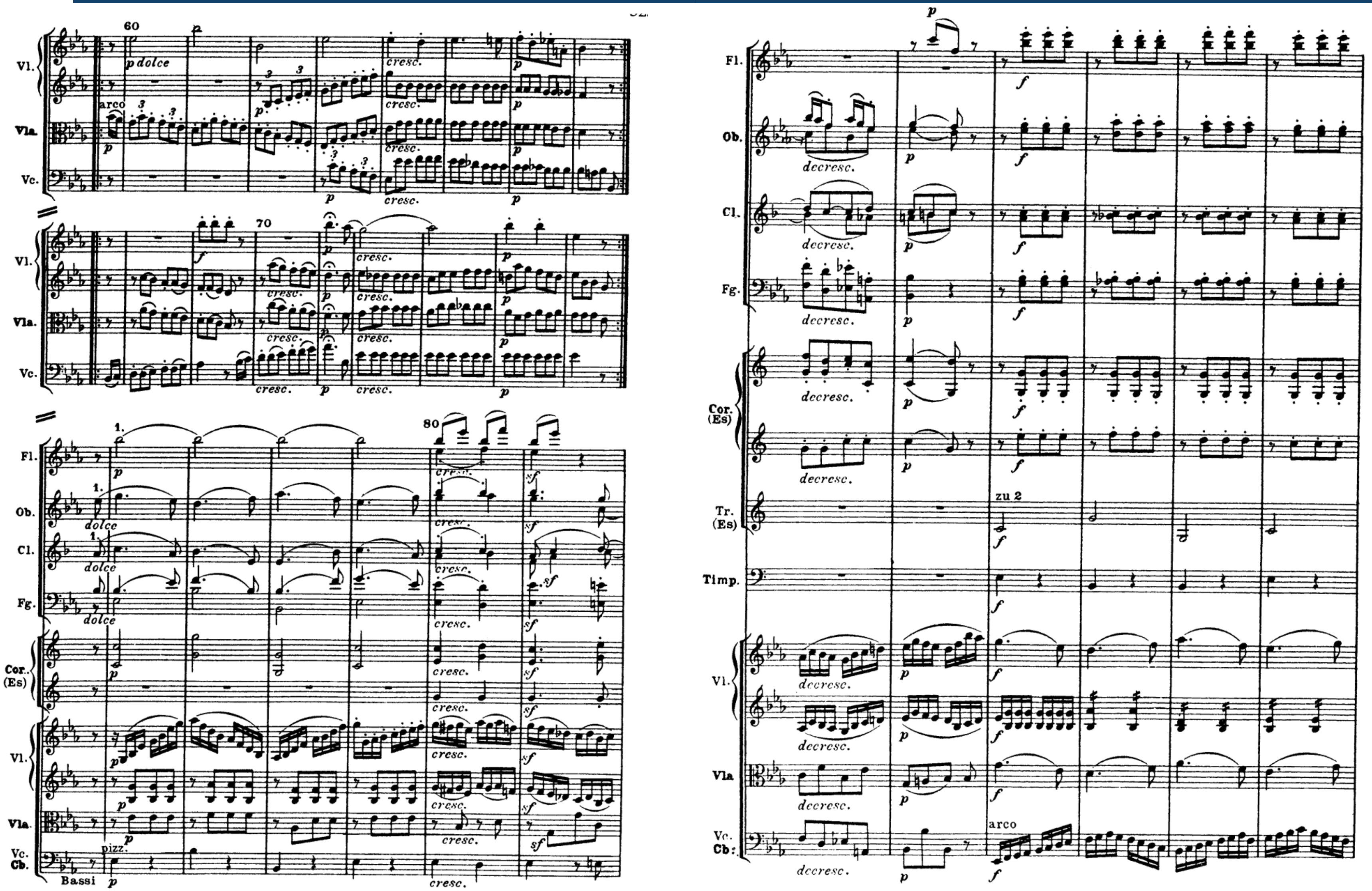
SYMPHONY NO. 3, 4TH MOVEMENT [1/4]



SYMPHONY NO. 3, 4TH MOVEMENT [2/4]



SYMPHONY NO. 3, 4TH MOVEMENT [3/4]



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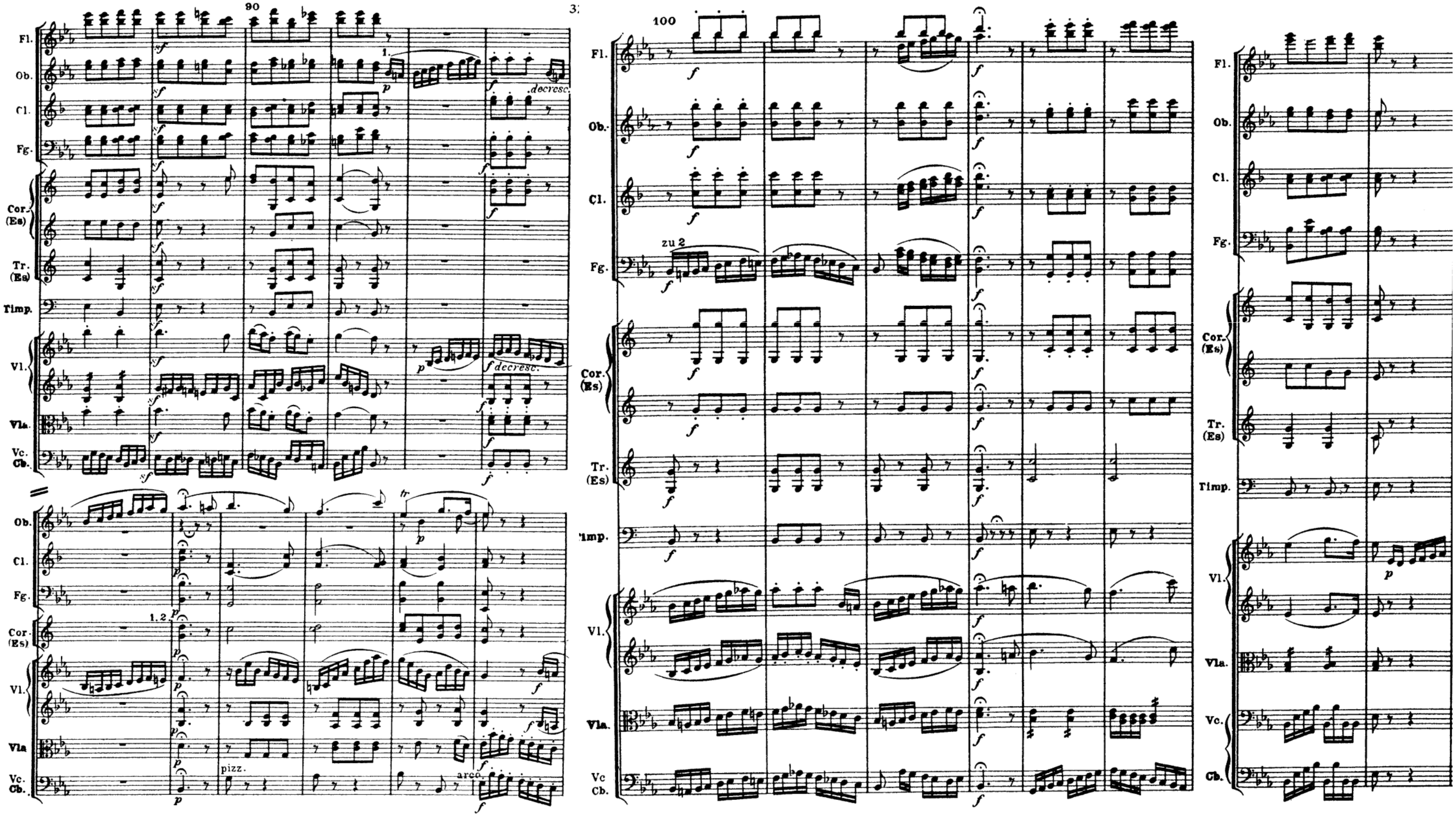
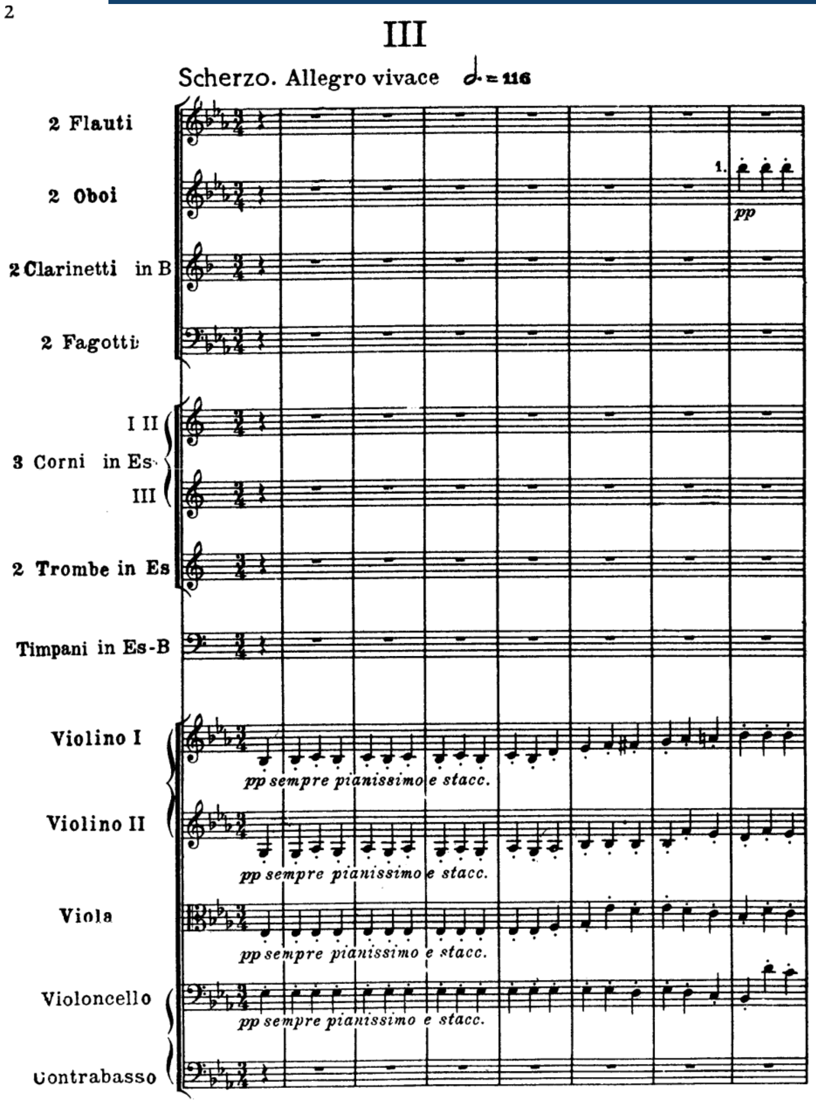
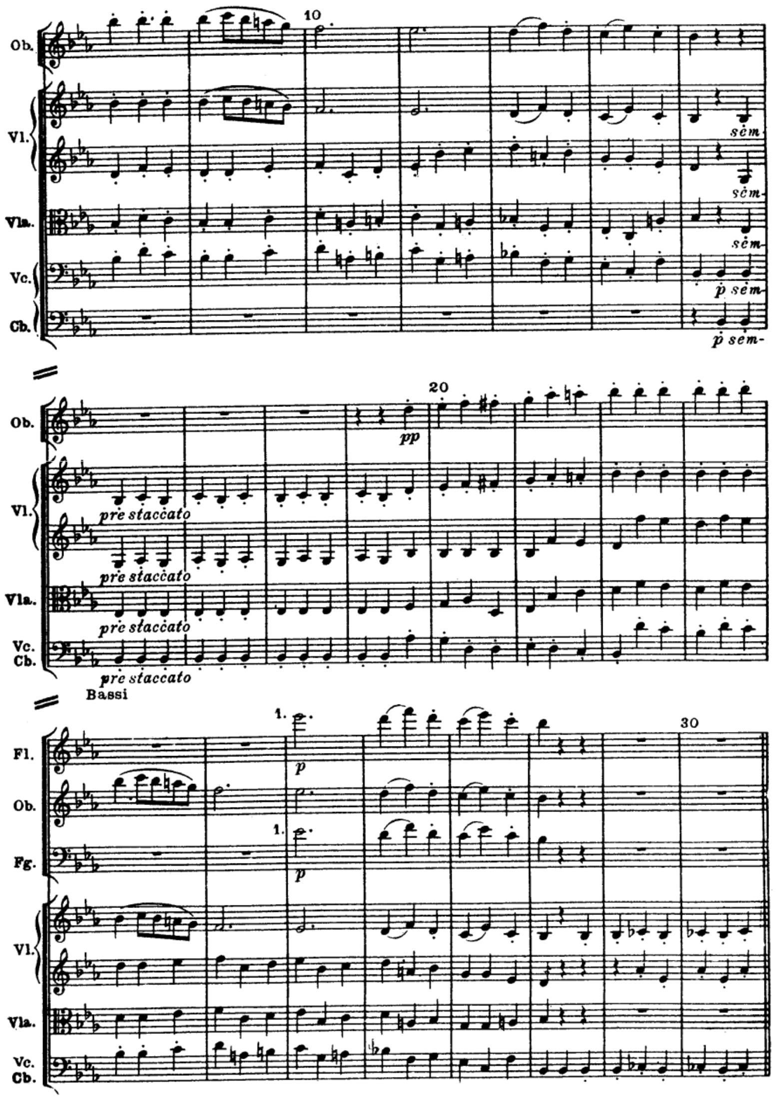
SYMPHONY NO. 3, 4TH MOVEMENT [4/4]



SYMPHONY NO. 3, 3RD MOVEMENT





LECTURE RECAP

- Beethoven – totemic figure in the history of Western Art Music. The ‘Beethoven myth’ is the foundation of our perceptions of musical practice to this day
- Beethoven’s output and life inextricably linked. Common practice to divide them into different segments, usually three, with dividing points at 1802 and 1812
- ‘Middle period’ Beethoven – larger scope than previous works, ‘heroic’ tone and style, universality, monumentality
- Technical features of Beethoven’s middle period works:
  - mastery of formal control over huge spans (often controlled by ‘struggle-to-victory’ trajectory
  - more distant modulations (inc. central modulations to areas other than the predictable dominant/relative major)
  - pervasive motivic interconnections